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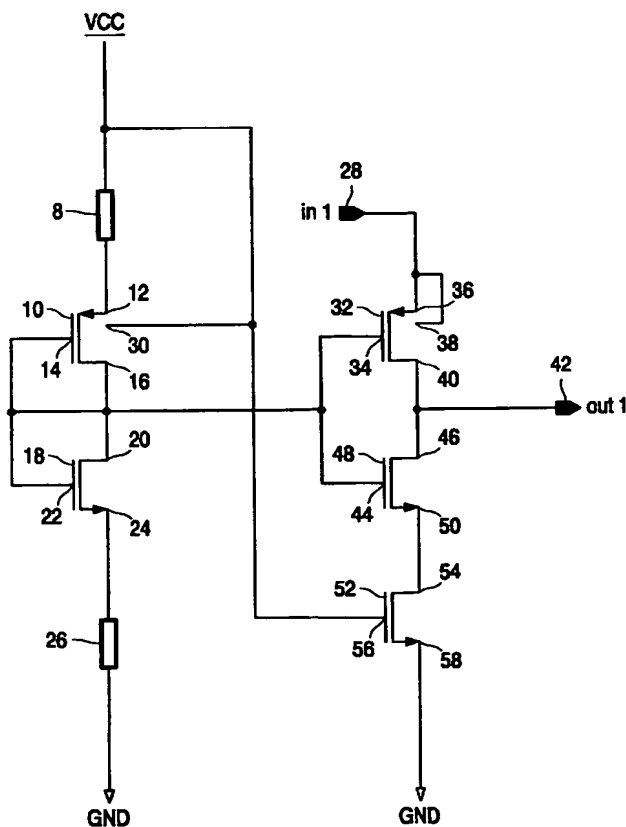
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(54) Title: FAIL-SAFE METHOD AND CIRCUIT



(57) **Abstract:** A method and a circuit for producing a fail-safe output signal in case of an open circuit condition of an input pad of a digital circuit unit, comprising a first inverter stage (10, 18) providing a constant switch level; a second inverter stage (32, 44) providing a variable switch level that depends of the signal level of the input pad (28) and comparing the constant switch level of the first inverter stage (10, 18) with the variable switch level of the second stage (32, 44) and providing an output signal at an output terminal (42) thereof if the variable switch level of the second stage (32, 44) is greater than the constant switch level; and an additional circuit element (52) connected in series with the second inverter (32, 44) for decreasing the switch level of the second inverter stage (32, 44).

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